

Livestock / Predator Q & A

Protecting Animals from Wolves, Black Bears and Mountain Lions

Q: What does Idaho law say about livestock owners protecting their livestock?

A: Idaho Code 36-1107(b and c) – The law states: “b) Control of depredation of black bear, mountain lion, and predators. Black bear, mountain lion, and predators may be disposed of by livestock owners, their employees, agents and animal damage control personnel when same are molesting or attacking livestock and it shall not be necessary to obtain any permit from (Fish and Game). Mountain lion so taken shall be reported to the director within ten (10) days of being taken. Livestock owners may take steps they deem necessary to protect their livestock.”

“(c) Control of depredation of wolves. Wolves may be disposed of by livestock or domestic animal owners, their employees, agents and animal damage control personnel when the same are molesting or attacking livestock or domestic animals and it shall not be necessary to obtain any permit from (Fish and Game). Wolves so taken shall be reported to the director within seventy-two (72) hours, with additional reasonable time allowed if access to the site where taken is limited. Wolves so taken shall remain the property of the state. Livestock and domestic animal owners may take all nonlethal steps they deem necessary to protect their property. A permit must be obtained from the director to control wolves not molesting or attacking livestock or domestic animals. Control is also permitted by owners, their employees and agents pursuant to the Idaho department of fish and game harvest rules.”

Q: If I find livestock I think was attacked or killed by wolves, bears or mountain lions, what should I do?

A: If your livestock or pets have been killed by a wolf, bear, or mountain lion you should attempt to protect the evidence by placing a tarp over the carcass, take photographs of the carcass and the immediate area, tracks, etc., limit disturbance of the site, and immediately call either U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services at 1-866-487-3297; or call your local Idaho Fish and Game office at the listed numbers below. If Wildlife Services verifies that the carcass was killed by a wolf, bear or mountain lion it may be possible to receive

reimbursement for the loss. It is important to contact officials immediately when either livestock or a wolf has been killed to expedite the process and to maximize evidence associated with the investigations.

Q: When I see a wolf, lion or black bear on my property what can I do?

A: If a wolf, bear or lion is merely in the general area and not molesting your animals, it can't be killed under this law. If the wolf, bear, or lion is merely feeding on a carcass but has not been seen attacking or molesting, it can not be killed; that animal may have died from other causes. Molesting means "actions of a wolf that are annoying, disturbing or persecuting, especially with hostile intent or injurious effect, or chasing, driving, flushing, worrying, following after or on the trail of, or stalking or lying in wait for, livestock or domestic animals." Anyone concerned about their livestock, should contact Fish and Game or Wildlife Services. Fish and Game will help monitor the situation and may be able to assist in preventing a potential problem.

Q: Will I get a ticket if I shoot a wolf, lion or black bear that is molesting my dog or horse?

A: The Idaho Department of Fish and Game says that people should be able to protect their private property, including all domestic animals. Protecting your animals is allowed, but Fish and Game also is obligated to assure the killing was legitimate. Everything you can do to help demonstrate what happened is in your best interest, including protecting the site and reporting the incident in a timely fashion.

Q: If I shoot a wolf, lion, or black bear to protect my animals, what do I have to do?

A: If you kill a wolf or a mountain lion, you are required to report it to Fish and Game. To preserve the carcass and assure that the animal was taken legally, the kill should be reported as soon as reasonably possible. Under this law, killing a wolf requires reporting within 72 hours. Killing a mountain lion requires reporting within 10 days. But to assure the animal was taken legally, it is in your best interest to preserve the site and report the killing of the animal, including bears, as soon as possible. Additionally, a wolf, bear or

lion may be killed by a tag holder during the open season and must be reported to Fish and Game within 24 hours for wolves, and within 10 days for bears and lions.

Q: If the wolf, lion or black bear has killed my livestock or caused a safety problem or property damage but it is not caught molesting or attacking, can I still kill it?

A: If a wolf, black bear or mountain lion has recently killed or injured your legally present livestock or domestic animals, has caused real or significant property damage, or shows a continued threat to property or human safety, you may request a kill permit from the Fish and Game director. You should contact Fish and Game if you are having problems with wildlife, and a representative will review alternatives, including non lethal techniques, to reduce or eliminate potential conflicts. Hunting, including the use of depredation hunts, will be considered a preferred alternative.

Q: Can I keep the wolf, lion or bear I killed to protect my livestock?

A: No. Unless it was legally taken during a hunting season and you have legally tagged the animal, it remains the property of the state of Idaho. You may, however, be able to buy it at Fish and Game's annual fur and antler auction.

Q: What about other predators?

A: Coyotes, skunks, weasels and jackrabbits are legally defined as predators. They may be taken year round by any licensed hunter. Landowners or their agents are not required to have a license to kill these predators if they are molesting domestic animals. Grizzly bears, eagles, hawks and owls are protected by federal law and may not be killed. Grizzly bears in the Yellowstone National Park area are no longer protected under federal law, but they are protected under state law. There is no open season on them. Grizzly bears may be killed in self-defense. They may not be killed to protect livestock. You should contact Fish and Game if you are having grizzly bear problems.

Help us manage wolves!

More information and wolf reporting forms are available at

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/> . If you think you have a wolf

depredation, contact **Wildlife Services at: 1-866-487-3297**. For a wolf mortality, or other related incident requiring immediate attention, contact Fish and Game:

- Headquarters, Boise 208-334-3700
- Panhandle Region, Coeur d'Alene 208-769-1414
- Clearwater Region, Lewiston 208-799-5010
- Southwest Region, Nampa208-465-8465
- McCall Subregion 208-634-8137
- Magic Valley Region, Jerome 208-324-4350
- Southeast Region, Pocatello 208-232-4703
- Upper Snake Region, Idaho Falls 208-525-7290
- Salmon Region, Salmon 208-756-2271

For sightings or more information on wolves in the Lewiston or McCall area, contact the Nez Perce Tribe at 208-634-1061.